



International Centre for
Research in Children's
Literature, Literacy and
Creativity

**Annual Monitoring Report for the
The International Centre for Research in Children's Literature, Literacy and Creativity
No. 11, 2007 -2008.**

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1. The aims for the Primary English and Children's Literature Research Centre team in 2007-2008 have been to

- continue to develop the publications profile
- consolidate the work on projects previously set up
- develop collaborative projects with other institutions
- develop new research project opportunities suitable for funding bids
- extend the Worcester Storytelling Festival
- develop the collection resources of the Centre
- continue to develop the local, national and international recognition of the Centre

2. Staffing

Prof. Jean Webb: Co-Director and Children's Literature

Dr Robyn Cox: Co-Director, Literacy and Primary English

Dr. Bob Fox and Dr Stephen Bigger: retired from full-time work during this academic year.

They retain association with the Centre.

Hon. Professor: Prof Maria Nikolajeva.

Rachel Johnson Research Librarian – Collections development & maintenance of the Collections.

Prof Maria Nikolajeva was appointed to a Chair in Children's Literature at the University of Cambridge, at Homerton. She took up the post in Sept. 2008 and has expressed her warm interest in being able to develop her associations further with the Centre now that she is permanently resident in the UK.

i Research students with Directors of Study and internal supervisors

Full-time:

Research studentship Maya Das unfortunately had to withdraw because of personal reasons. The studentship was restored to the 3 years funding by the Executive Management. Publicised in summer 08 the successful candidate was Laura Jones who starts in Sept. 2008. (JAW, Dr Andreas Mueller, Dr Paddy McNally)

Part-time:

Pippa Abbott (BF & JAW)

Lone Hattinge (RC)

Rachel Johnson (JAW) – thesis submitted Summer 08.

Steve Arnott (JAW & BF)

Fawzia Gilani-Williams (JAW; RC; SB)

ii Associated colleagues at UW:

Storytelling Festival Team: Steve Boffy, David Broster, Maureen Gamble, Rachel Johnson, Andy Stevenson.

Olympic Storytelling Project: Prof James Riordan, Dr Derek Peters, Steve Arnott

Obesity Project: Dr Derek Peters

Dr Claire Cochrane, consultation on potential projects

iii Administration Carolyn Ralphs at Faculty level for budget and administrative support for RLF Fellows.

iv Time allocation for staffing to the Centre was 1 module relief from teaching from AH&SS for Jean Webb plus a further 1 module research time. Otherwise work has been carried out by Centre colleagues in their contractual allocations for research and scholarly development, and in their personal time.

3. Overview and commentary

The past year has seen a continuation of the considerable level of activity and strengthening of the national and international profile of the Centre regarding research; collaborative projects, the development of funding bids; the extension and development of resources; conference attendance and publication by Centre members and research students.

As the Centre has developed over the past year there is a clear distinctiveness about the research carried out which clearly demonstrates an interdisciplinary approach; the consciousness of engagement with subject development from international perspectives; a strong sense of cultural consciousness with the interpretation of text as being central. In terms of activities, the Centre has continued with a strong inclusively 'outreach' approach adding to the cultural experience and awareness within the region.

4. Funding.

Expenditure As previously the overall expenditure from the Centre budget has been low this year, and has been directed towards necessary expenses in the support of research; and conference presentations.

- The Children's Storytelling Festival was supported by external bids made by Steve Boffy on behalf of the festival.
- Jean Webb was supported for conferences by AH&SS.
- The scanning and preparation of the 'Doll' manuscript for editing was carried out by a volunteer who was paid an honorarium from the AH&SS research fund.
- Additions to the Collections and expendable materials were supported by a separate Collections budget from ILS.

There was no direct income into the Centre budget this year as expenses outlined were covered by alternative means.

5. Funding bids

No funding bids were made this year directly from the Centre, since preparations were made for bids to be put in during the next academic year as follows:

- Association of Commonwealth Universities/British Academy Visiting Researcher: completed Sept 08: Dr Anto Chakramakkil, ChLA India was the supported applicant.
- Leverhulme Visiting Researcher: development with Prof Mavis Reimer, Director of the Centre for Research in Young People's Texts and Cultures: Proforma B completed; 'A' in preparation, Oct 08.
- AHRC Obesity Research Network funding: collaborative project JAW & team members: Prof Al-Nakeeb, Newman University College Birmingham; Dr Derek Peters, UW.
- PhD Studentship applied for at UW; not successful

6. Key areas of activity:

The activities of the Centre can broadly be divided into 3 areas which are inter-related:

- I. Events**
- II. Collaborative research and development**
- III. Individual research activities by team members.**

Royal Literary Fund Contract renewed. Brian Morse sadly died in Oct 2007. His RLF contract was taken up by Lyn Webster Wilde in addition to her extant hours as the other RLF WiR. The programme was busier than ever. The contract was renewed for a further year and will be taken up by Heather Dyer in Sept 0. Heather Dyer is also a successful children's author. Lyn Webster Wilde completed her three year maximum contract from the RLF. She is warmly thanked for her hard work, professionalism and enthusiasm in the post and her considerable contribution to UW.

6.I Events

6.1.1 Worcester Children's Storytelling and Media Festival:

- i. Steve Boffy's support as Arts Advisory Officer was invaluable enabling the Festival to be extended and the children to enjoy enhanced facilities on campus, since Steve secured funding to hire a yurt for the storytelling and also for performers.
- ii. The programme was extended this year by one day and also by bringing in children from Herefordshire schools.
- iii. We were also able to work with artists and performers new to the Festival, such as the Puppetlink company and Kat Wetherall, storyteller.
- iv. We continue to collaborate successfully with Worcester City Children's Library in the provision of a storyteller which they funded and a day of storytelling in the City Library.
- v. Circa 240 children attended on campus over the 2 days, plus teachers and helpers. Student involvement was strong from Drama, Education, Student Ambassadors and IT (in the creation of the website). It was a most successful event, with the planning and organisation running very smoothly.
- vi. The events for 2008 were:
- vii. Storytelling in the yurt with Kat Wetherall
- viii. Creative art workshop
- ix. Interactive Drama performance by The Attic Company, devised and directed by David Broster
- x. Puppetlink performance
- xi. Storyteller in the Worcester City Children's Library
- xii. Sponsorship in the form of fruit for refreshments for the children was very generously provided by Gwillam's farm Shop Worcester.
- xiii. The Team will work on a Festival for 2008-09 to be delivered in June 09.

6.1.2 City Event: Michael Rosen & Michael Morpurgo.

- i. An event is planned to take place for children and parents in Worcester in Autumn 2008. Funding has been applied for by Steve Boffy, to be confirmed.

6.1.3 Extra Mural Activities. Through the Worcester Storytelling Festival and contacts made via Steve Boffy there are a number of writers who have expressed a desire to work with the Centre, for example Karen Wallace, an award winning writer for children. These events fit in with the programme of extra mural activities being organized by Dr Julie Maclusky (IHCA) who is an expert in creative writing.

6.1.4 Wychewood Festival Cheltenham.

- i. Through a contact via Dr Jill Terry the Centre was asked if we would be interested in participating in a consultative capacity in a developing section of the Wychewood festival Cheltenham.
- ii. A meeting has been held with Steve Boffy, the Wychewood organizer, JT & JAW to discuss possibilities and sponsorship from UW to promote the profile of the University in the region.

6.II Collaborative research and development.

6.II.1 Obesity and Children's Literature project

- i. JAW, Dr Derek Peters (Sports Science) and Prof Yahya Al-Nakeeb (Newman University College, Birmingham) have brought together a multidisciplinary and international group to apply for a major funding bid 2008-09. Focus thus far on an international research network. Colleagues, for example, in the US, Estonia and Norway have expressed their interest and support.
- ii. The Wellcome Trust have been contacted by JAW for advice on the viability of an interdisciplinary project funded by them. Prof Al-Nakeeb has carried out research into viability of funding from other bodies e.g. ESRC & AHRC.
- iii. A conference is planned for Autumn 2008 at Newman University College, funded by Newman. The conference will stimulate interest from interested parties and outside bodies. Papers to be given by Prof Al-Nakeeb, DP, JW & others.
- iv. JAW gave a research seminar paper on obesity and children's literature at Newman, Summer 08.
- v. The project continues to stimulate interest from the media. Ann Diamond, media journalist, contacted JAW and would be interested in coming to Worcester to speak as she is preparing a book on obesity. JAW was consulted about her work by Ann Diamond in relation to Ms Diamond's research for her book.

6.II.2 India.

- i. JAW & Rachel Johnson gave papers at the ChLA India conference in Mangalore, January 2008 organised by Anto Thomas Chakramakkil (see below individual research). Work is ongoing to support the work of the Children's Literature Research Centre in India.
- ii. JAW is editing a collection of essays from the conference and preparing a book proposal to be submitted to CSP.
- iii. A bid to the Association of Commonwealth of Universities/British Academy Visiting Fellowship fund was prepared and submitted Sept 08. The proposed two month visit by Dr Chakramakkil will focus on the construction of India and Indian identity in Indian, British Asian and English fiction for children.

6.II.3 Visiting Researcher Leverhulme/UW Development of a bid to Leverhulme for a Visiting Researcher. This is through collaboration with Prof Mavis Reimer, University of Winnipeg. The project will focus on the construction of multi-cultural identities through children's literature. Proforma B was submitted in Sept 08.

6.II.4 Olympic storytelling project

- i. Team: Jim Riordan (Sports Vis. Prof) - stories Robyn Cox (Education.) teaching materials and trialling in schools; Derek Peters (Sports) – advisor sports & health. JAW. Illustrations Steve Arnott, Wolverhampton.
- ii. Robyn Cox has carried out research in schools on children's critical approaches. This has been fed back to Jim Riordan, and a similar process will be engaged in with Steve Arnott's illustrations for the collection of stories.
- iii. The team is planning publication of the stories. Funding for this project has been provided by IHAC.
- iv. RC & JAW met with a SAGE publications commissioning editor, June 08. Subsequently RC & JAW are working on a book proposal to SAGE *Childist Criticism: an applied approach*.

6.11.5 Writers and Artists Collaborative group.

Following on the success of the Storytelling Festival and the increasing engagement of writers and creative artists from the region with the Centre, the idea of a collaborative group associated with the centre and UW is being developed by the Centre team and Steve Boffy. Anne Hannaford has also expressed an interest, as this will look forward to the new UW library development in the city.

6.II.6 Text messaging and stories.

- i. Team: Dr Clare Wood, University of Coventry and Dr Robyn Cox, Education UW & JAW.
- ii. As part of the research collaboration day with Coventry University organised by Geoffrey Elliott, Summer 08, a collaborative project has been developed by the team to determine the efficacy of text messaging as a platform for composing stories/literature for children and the development of literacy.
- iii. The project will also develop a methodology for bringing children's authors and children together in the composing process via the use of new technologies.
- iv. A collaborative funding bid will be made. Dr Wood already has a track record in research in the children's use of mobile 'phones.
- v. Internal seedcorn funding is being sought internally at UW re: Knowledge Transfer.

6.II.7 Autobiographies of Childhood.

- i. JAW with Dr Andrea Petersen, Education University of Birmingham. Dr Petersen has been carrying out research on the collection of autobiographies of childhood held by the Centre.
- ii. They are planning a co-authored book.
- iii. A joint funded research studentship will be applied for either at UW or Birmingham, 2008-09.

6.II.8 International Youth Library, Munich and an International Research Network.

- i. JAW met with Dr Christiana Raabe, Director of the IYL, Munich to discuss collaboration. The possibility of a research network was discussed. JAW wrote a concept paper and submitted it to Dr Raabe as requested. She has yet to respond.

6.II.9 Folklore:

- i. Dr Mikel Koven is an internationally recognised expert on folklore and is very active, for example in the Folklore Society. MK & JAW are developing associations variously to incorporate this work into the Centre. For example, MK has developed a strong association with John Turrell (previously a part-time PhD student with JAW) who has a unique research collection of children's playground games stories and songs in Herefordshire over the past 30 years. Mr. Turrell is very keen to continue his work and association with the Centre.

6.II.10 On-line Journal in Children's Literature, Literacy and Creativity.

In development: Stephen Bigger, JAW & RC.

6.II.11 Centre Seminar series Development of a regional and national seminar series which will be put into operation in 2008-09. JAW, RC.

7. Research, publications, conferences, activities: Centre staff.

7.1 Stephen Bigger:

Refereed Article:

Bigger, S. 'Secular Spiritual Education?' *Educational Futures*, vol. 1, no. 1, June, pp.49-69 (British Education Studies Association)

Other Articles:

Bigger, S 2007 *David Severn (David Storr Unwin), Children's Writer 1942-1977* (Research Paper, (eprints) International Research Centre for Children's Literature, Language and Creativity, Worcester).

Bigger, S 2007 *Sea Adventures: Peter Dawlish (James Lennox Kerr), a Writer Amongst Artists.* (eprints)

Bigger, S 2008 'Parents in Difficulty: Writing for children in the Second World War', Malcolm Saville Society Bulletin

Bigger, S 2008 'The Mysteries of Muker', Malcolm Saville Society Bulletin.

Bigger, S 2008 Malcolm Saville and W.E. Johns, Malcolm Saville Society Bulletin.

Dissertation:

Mental success visualisations, story and metaphor. An ethnographic case study of work with dysfunctional pupils. (MA in Education, 2008)

Conference paper:

Bigger, S 2008 Building self-worth and self understanding through guided visualisation: a unique project with disturbed pupils *Health and Well Being Conference, 27th February 2008*, University of Worcester (paper)

Report:

Bigger, S 2008 *The Swindon Youth Empowerment Programme - the full report.*

Book Reviews of:

Murphy, K, *Emotional Intelligence: what are the problems and can they be solved.* (Journal of Beliefs and Values)

Dowling E M & Scarlett W. G (2006) *Encyclopedia of Religious and Spiritual Development* Thousand Oaks: Sage (Journal of Beliefs and Values)

Roehlkepartain E C et al, (2006), *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence* Thousand Oaks: Sage (Journal of Beliefs and Values)

Stern, Schools and Religions (2007), Continuum. (Journal of In-Service Education)

Ethnographica Moralia (interpretive ethnography) (Journal of Beliefs and Values)

Therapeutic Education (<http://escalate.ac.uk/4752>)

The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education (<http://escalate.ac.uk/4866>)

Every Muslim Child Matters (<http://escalate.ac.uk/4863>)

Other activities:

EdD External Examiner, University of Gloucestershire.

Journal Editorial/referee: *Journal of Beliefs and Values; Educational Research; Research in Post-Compulsory Education; Educational Management and Administration.*

7.2 Dr Robyn Cox.

Books and Chapters in Books:

Mills, C., Cox, R. and Moss, G. 2008 contract signed

Language and Literacies in the Primary School. (2nd ed.) London: Taylor and Francis.

Robertson, C. and Cox, R. (2008)

'How we do things around here': Educational change and effective Faculty leadership in Post Blair Britain. In McConachie, J., Danaher, P., and Singh, M. Changing University Learning and Teaching: Engaging and Mobilising Leadership, Quality and Technology. Rockhampton: Central Queensland University, Australia.

Refereed Journals:

Robertson, C. Robbins, A and Cox, R (2008)
Co-constructing a Community Ethos: Challenging Culture and Managing Change in Higher Education, a case study undertaken over two years. In Management in Education 22 (4) P. 43-51.

Cox, R (*Accepted for publication 2008*)
Using Community Narratives for Intercultural Education. International Journal of Intercultural Education.

Cox, R and Schaetzel, K (2007) A preliminary study of pre-service teachers as readers in Singapore. Language Teaching Research 11 (3).

Conference Papers:

Robertson, C. and Cox, R (2008) Changing Times and Changing Children: Teacher Education for a Changing World to be presented at Conference on Educational Renewal and School Development in an Era of Cultural Diversity, Wuhan, China May 18th.

Cox, R. (2008) Literate Well-Being: Reflecting on reading pedagogy in the post Rose review era. Presented at the United Kingdom Literacy Association International Conference, Liverpool Hope University June.

Cox, R and Fatima Pirbhai-Illich, (2008) Identities, culture and literacies: Research with ethnic minorities in Canada and Australia. Presented at the United Kingdom Literacy Association International Conference, Liverpool Hope University June.

Cox R (2008) Literate Well-being: Children and reading in the primary school. Paper presented at Health and Well-Being Research Focus Day, February 27th 2008 University of Worcester.

Cox, R and Merchant, G. (2008) Working in the regions: Providing life blood to Professional Associations Invited keynote to International Reading Association International Development in Europe and Eurasia Leadership Workshop, January 22nd, 2008 Cluj, Romania.

Cox, R and Riordan, J (2007) 'The Olympic Stories Project' Paper presented at The Integrated Children's Agenda Research Focus Day 22nd May, 2007

Cox, R and Mills, C (2007) "Improving, evaluating and learning": Looking for thinking voices in early professional development and English literacy teaching. Paper presented at the United Kingdom Literacy Association Annual Conference, July 2007.

Cox, R. (2007) E-reading and wilfing? Do we need to adjust our views of the act of reading? Paper presented at Acts of Reading: Teachers, texts and Childhood from 18th Century to the Present. 19 April 2007, University of Cambridge Faculty of Education, England.

Research Funding:

Successful Seed Funding for ‘Sports stories and teaching support materials: Summer Olympics 2012: interdisciplinary project.’ From Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Worcester Budget, 2007. £1,000.

Editorial Board Work:

Editorial Board of *The Journal of Asia TEFL* (The Asian Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language)

National Committee work:

United Kingdom Association for Literacy Educators – National Committee Member

7.3 Dr Bob Fox, retired 2008.

Internal PhD supervision

With Jean Webb –Pippa Abbott, and Steve Arnott

External PhD supervision

External supervisor for Susan Haywood, ICT tutor at Bath Spa University College, PhD about talking stories.

7.4 Jean Webb

Publications

Conference papers:

November 2007 IBBY Roehampton: Illustration from international perspectives. ‘Aesthetic Hegemony: Western Scholars and Native American Culture.’ Paper given and accepted for publication as a chapter in a CSP publication. See below.

January 2008 ChLA India: keynote ‘Politics and Children’s Literature.’ Editing the collection of papers from the conference to submit to CSP.

June 2008 ChLA Illinois, US. Paper given. A discussion of the contemporary relevance of Michelle Paver’s series *Chronicles of Ancient Darkness*

June 2008 ChLA Illinois, US. Paper given and international committee member meetings.

Revised version of the Michelle Paver paper.

Guest seminar at Newman University College, Birmingham: Obesity and children’s literature

Conference papers accepted for 2008-09

November 08 Research Focus Landscape Conference UW.

November 08 MA/IBBY conference National Centre for Research in Children’s Literature, Roehampton. Publication

April 2009 British Library/Homerton Cambridge conference on poetry for children. Probable publication.

Will submit papers to calls for papers for:

Irish CLA February 2009

ChLA for June 2009

IRSCL Frankfurt, August 2009.

Invited as a keynote speaker:

Children’s Festival Palermo, May 09

Diana Wynne Jones conference, Bristol, July, 09
Lampeter conference on 'The Classics in Children's Literature', July 09
Australian Children's Literature Assoc conference, Sydney June 2010.

Publications.

- i. Piece included in an article on storytelling in the *Psychologies Magazine*, Nov. 2007.
- ii. Webb, Jean 'Voracious appetites: the construction of 'fatness' in children's literature.' *Critical Approaches to Food in Children's Literature* K. Keeling and S. Pollard ed. Routledge 2008.
- iii. 'Aesthetic Hegemony: Western Scholars and Native American Culture' in *Ways of Seeing Illustration from International Perspectives* ed. P. Pinsent, CSP 2008.
- iv. Doll manuscript preparation for publication.

PhD External examining University of Surrey
University of Queensland, Australia

Journal Editing and Advisory Boards

Worcester Papers: Joint editor with Dr Andreas Mueller.
Journal of Children's Literature editorial board
ChLA India international journal advisory editorial board
Advisory editorial board for new series on culture and children's literature, University of Michigan Press.
Children's Literature in Education editorial Board.

Miscellaneous

Member of the International Committee, Children's Literature Association (American). Meeting June 2007, Illinois, ChLA Conference
Advisory Board ChLA India
Consultant for the Astrid Lindgren Award.
Consultant for the Brothers' Grimm Award.

PhD supervision

Currently supervising 5 students in the field at UW
1 external supervision

External examining

PhD University of Surrey; Roehampton Institute.
PhD Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia.

Curriculum development:

Course Leader MA Children's Literature: International Perspectives. Recruitment on-going to achieve the required number of students to run the programme.

8.0 Research student publications and conferences:

8.1 Rachel Johnson: part-time research student:

Publications, conferences, papers given, and research visits

Attended IBBY Conference Roehampton University, November 2007.

Papers given:

'Personal and Political Identity and Disguise in *The Tiger of Mysore* by G.A. Henty (1832-1902).' Children's Literature Association India Conference. January 2008.

'The University of Worcester Research Collections in Collaboration with the International Research Centre for Children's Literature, Literacy and Creativity.' Plenary. Children's Literature Association India Conference. January 2008.

'Looking and Seeing: into picture books.' Seminar conducted for the Education Librarian's Group. Seven Stories, Newcastle upon Tyne March 12th 2008.

'Goblinization: a reading of the marginalisation of the colonial subject in *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872) and *The Princess and Curdie* (1883) by George MacDonald (1824-1905)'. C.S. Lewis and Friends Colloquium. Taylor University, Upland, Indiana, USA. May 29 - June 1. 2008.

'The University of Worcester Research Collections in Collaboration with the International Research Centre for Children's Literature, Literacy and Creativity.' Plenary. C.S. Lewis and Friends Colloquium. Taylor University, Upland, Indiana, USA. May 29 - June 1. 2008.

Director of Reader's Theatre Production of 'Dramatic Illustrations from the Second Part of The Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan by Louisa MacDonald.' C.S. Lewis and Friends Colloquium. Taylor University, Upland, Indiana, USA. May 29 - June 1. 2008.

'Personal and Political Identity and Disguise in *The Tiger of Mysore* by G.A. Henty (1832-1902).' Henty Society Gathering. June 16th 2008. Duxford, Cambs. UK.

9. Statement of Resources Collections

Additions:

- i. Games deposited by Mrs Jean Tsushina - Czech, French, Japanese, English
- ii. The Wynne Collection- books written by 19th Century authors contemporary with Henty with an emphasis on adventure.
- iii. A number of child related smaller deposits including items for children and items about children.
- iv. Percy Westerman manuscripts

Enquiries:

E-mail and telephone enquiries were received relating to material held in the Collections.

Researcher visits to work with the Williams Collection of Accounts of Childhood.

Developments:

A part time cataloguer has been appointed. She is currently working on the Elkin Collection which is being added to the Peirson Library catalogue available via Resources Online.

The Research and Development Manager has been appointed. Part of her remit is to manage the Research Librarian

10. Research Centre Budget

Information may be available on request

Prof. Jean Webb, on behalf of the Centre team. October 2008